

# HIP TO BE SQUARE

DEVELOPER : City of Stonnington  
MAIN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY : Kane Constructions  
ARCHITECT : Lyons Architecture  
CONSTRUCTION VALUE : \$60 million



Prahran Square officially opened to the public in December 2019 following two years of extensive, complex and demanding construction works. The square includes 500 car parking spaces across two underground levels, four streets upgraded linking Chapel Street and Commercial Road to Prahran Square, three above ground grandstands, restaurant and café pavilion with sensory garden, central water feature, open paved areas, public amenities, and several art poles forming spectacular light and sound shows.

**The \$60 million Prahran Square redevelopment separates the 10,000m<sup>2</sup> park into nine distinct areas including a central square creating a vibrant open space for recreation, events, festivals, markets, fitness, and socialising.** The square includes retail spaces, landscaping, shaded areas, terraced seating and parking.

The public redevelopment is an exciting project initiated by the City of Stonnington to provide open space for festivals, events and recreation within the popular Chapel Street Precinct. Prahran Square is the single largest construction project the City of Stonnington has undertaken.

The modern urban parkland designed by Lyons Architecture and landscape architects, Aspect Studios represents a much needed expansion of open public space in a part of Melbourne anticipating continued population growth.

Kane Constructions was awarded the contract to deliver Prahran Square in November 2017. Onsite work commenced in January 2018

with the demolition of the existing Cato Street car park and excavation of two underground car parking levels.

Facilities include commercial spaces, a water play area, an accessible “forest walk” and lawns and seating. A variety of different installations and artworks are on show, including a number of 11m high poles holding vertical screens to generate spectacular light shows. The structure also includes ecologically sensitive features, including solar energy generation and stormwater capture and management.

“The car park is a feature in itself, with painted ceilings, bright pink and fluorescent green line marking, coloured glass staircases and white terrazzo footpaths and columns. The large underground car park opens up to the street level above through large open voids and raking glass façades, so from the ground level, you can see your car parked below,” said Project Manager, David Purcell.

“We incorporated the community’s feedback into the construction,” said David. “Some of the shop owners wanted to have short term



parking for their customers, so we adjusted the drawings and added a number of indented parking bays.”

As the excavation progressed, archaeological remains were unearthed, delaying the work for up to two months while the local council worked with Heritage Victoria to secure archaeological finds. These included the remains of a tunnel, evidence of a 1850s farmhouse, late 1900s housing structural walls, toys, clay pipes, animal bones and crockery. The objects will be put on display within the square as a recognition of the area’s history.

“Given the nature of the public site, the challenges involved access for equipment and delivery, and safety and staging within an operational environment. With 150 workers onsite, the car park was completed in early October 2019 and from then on, the job quickly progressed in time for the opening of the square on 1 December 2019.”

“It’s rewarding creating quality architecture in public spaces,”



said David. “Community structures are a place to take design risks, with good architects and consultants working together to make innovative buildings.”

Kane Constructions is a privately owned commercial construction company active in all sectors of the industry. With a turnover in excess of \$1 billion and over 450 full time employees, Kane operate throughout the east coast of Australia and overseas from offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Canberra.

Kane Constructions was awarded the 2016 and 2019 National Construction Master Builder of the Year by Master Builders Australia and was also awarded Master Builder of the Year in Victoria for 2016, 2017, and 2019 by the Master Builders Association of Victoria.

**For more information contact Kane Constructions,** 658 Church Street, Richmond VIC 3121, phone 03 8420 1200, email [viccontact@kane.com.au](mailto:viccontact@kane.com.au), website [www.kane.com.au](http://www.kane.com.au)